The scars we share

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/82175296.

Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	Multi
Fandom:	Metal Family (Cartoon)
Relationships:	Dee/Lif (Metal Family), Glam | Sebastian Shvagenbagen/Victoria, Ches | Chive & Glam | Sebastian Shvagenbagen
Characters:	Dee (Metal Family), Lif (Metal Family), Glam | Sebastian Shvagenbagen, Victoria (Metal Family), Ches | Chive (Metal Family), Heavy (Metal Family)
Additional Tags:	Author Is Sleep Deprived, Fluff, Angst, Self-Harm, Dee-centric (Metal Family), Dee Needs a Hug (Metal Family), Trans Male Character, Teen Dee (Metal Family), Implied/Referenced Abuse, Past Abuse, Transphobia, Implied/Referenced Drug Use, Underage Smoking, Mild Sexual Content, How Do I Tag, I'm Bad at Tagging, Fluff and Angst, Hurt/Comfort, Good Parent Glam | Sebastian Shvagenbagen, Good Parent Victoria (Metal Family), Family Fluff
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-03-31 Updated: 2026-07-08 Words: 10,885 Chapters: 5/?

The scars we share

by zesty_frootloop

Summary

This takes place after episode 7. Dee is struggling with being the talentless musician and turns to self harm to cope with his feelings. Slowly, he opens up to Lif, Heavy, and then his parents (including Chive), Feeling so fragile and hopeless, he takes the shame and embarrassment he feels opening up as a blessing compared to being 6 feet under if he stayed silent. With the help of his loved ones, he feels less alone and begins to find healthier ways to cope.

Notes

❗❗❗A FEW THINGS BEFORE THE CHAPTER BEGINS❗❗❗

💚This is my first fic that I'm sharing publicly so I'm very scared but I also don't think many people will see this so it's okay I guess. I wanted to write this because it's always been hard for me to find fics with characters sharing my experiences and so I hope at least one person can see this can feel a bit less alone, and I just like writing in general. I might abandon this fairly quick, but I wrote the first few chapters a while ago so hopefully writers block doesn't hit me too fast.

💚I know this takes place in Russia, and I am unfortunately a dumb American and I don't have the energy to do research about how everything works there, like laws and stuff, but I'll try to do simple things like currency conversion, I might be stupid and tired but I wanna try at least a bit to make things somewhat accurate.

💚There might be some light smut but nothing serious.

💚Im projecting HEAVILY onto Dee so it might not make sense with the canon story so I do apologize if that bothers anyone.

💚This fic is in Dee's pov

💚I don't know Dee's official school schedule so this is what it will be in the fic. Math, science, History, English/literature, lunch, psychology, And then finally study hall/free period

💚I also apologize for and spelling/ grammar mistakes, I am trying my best to proof read before sharing but I might not catch everything.

💚Also for anyone struggling with suicidal thoughts, or struggles with self harm please reach out to your local crisis help line or trusted loves ones, I promise things will get better 🫶

💚Also the depictions of self harm might be a bit graphic so if that triggers you please read something else. I fear I've become a bit desensitized to what is too graphic for the typical person who may stumble upon this so I apologize. I will give warnings before chapters that need it.
That's being said WARNING FOR THE FIRST CHAPTER -DESCRIPTIONS OF SELF HARM ❗

💚And I have to give a possible cringe warning lol (I am VERY cringe, but I am free)

💚As it says in the summary, this takes places during/after episode 7 and then diverts from there, and because of that I'm pretending Lif and Dee know each other (like in person) instead of that happening in season 2. Basically just adding the events in S2E2 between episodes 6 and episode 7.

💚Ive been going over this for like 20 minutes, writing and rewriting things, and finally I think that's everything... I know that was a lot to read before this even starts. So with that being said please be kind and I hope you enjoy!!!! 🫶

Chapter 1: The beginning

I'm walking out of my dad's office. I feel like shit. All I wanted was to learn how to play the guitar to impress this girl from school who I've been messaging online. But what I got was yelling, and being told I'm a talentless musician.
I'm so sick of this.
‘ I'm sick of being the smart brother, I mean yeah, it's great when I get to correct people and make them feel less than. It always makes me feel better, it's hollow and doesn't last long, but it feels nice for a moment. But for once I want to be artistic, yeah you'll get praise for being smart, but people will also think you're rude and a smartass if you're not careful with what you say. I want to be appreciated for something I can do, like draw or play music. Why did Heavy get all the talent? ‘

I open my bedroom door and continue to search the Internet in hopes of finding someone who can actually teach me how to play the guitar. After another couple hours of pathetically strumming out of tune melodies I hear Heavy talking to his friends from school while playing his games.

“Hey what's up dudes! Hey let's play a round, I got dibs on damage dealer. Yeah! Mhm! Check it out dudes! Today was the first time ever that I picked up a guitar. It seems so damn easy. They say that you've gotta study rhythm, crap, I say just play it as you hear it. Nah, Dee isn't coming, he's been strumming that guitar all day, if I can play scream after only a couple minutes, then Dee must be shredding it like Eddie Van Halen ....”

I can't take it anymore. I can't stand listening to him brag about his talent, hearing his expectations of me become impossibly high. I shut my window and message the girl from school that I can't play the guitar.
I flop on my bed and start to sob into my pillow.
‘I feel so stupid. Why am I crying? This kind of thing has never affected me before. I don't get it. Why can't I get it? how am I supposed to understand anything if I can't understand myself?’
As more self deprecating thoughts flood my mind I start sobbing harder.
‘I just want all this to stop!’ I sink more into my pillows and tuck my head between my knees, I try to stop crying, I don't want anyone to hear me. They can't hear me. There's no way I'll let that happen. I lift my head from my pillow and take a deep breath. I look around my room, trying a 'grounding' I heard dad talk about. I decided to point out the things that are in arms reach. ‘ok. my phone, a pen, my nightstand, a glass of water, a blade, my headph- … wait.. a blade…’ A thought flashes through my head. A while ago in my psychology class we learned about different mental illnesses (depression, anxiety, PTSD, etc) and common ways they affected people. We went over things like alcohol and other drugs, but the teacher briefly mentioned types of self harm. Like engaging in risky behaviors or just hurting yourself on purpose. I could tell he felt uncomfortable talking about it, and I heard some kids whispering about attention seeking. I didn't understand why it stood out to me then, but looking at the dry skin around my fingernails that I pick at when I'm stressed… I realized pain has always sort of been my outlet. I take the blade in my fingers and just stare at it. It came with a window scraper mom got a while ago for a sticker on a motorcycle she was fixing up. She wasn't

using it anymore so I took it, figured I'd find a use for it. Never thought I'd use it for this though. I sit up and place the blade in my dominant hand, for a moment I second guess myself, just a moment of hesitation, knowing this decision can never be reversed, but despite that, I take the blade to my wrist. Not directly over any big veins so as not to cause anything life threatening, after all, Im depressed, not suicidal.
The blade was fairly sharp, shiney, and pristine- only ever being used once. I drag it across, watching my skin tear, observing the white line turning red from blood. It was small, I was scared of what I was doing. But despite that It feels … good? I cut another line, and another, and another, pushing slightly harder as I become more comfortable, until I'm satisfied. My wrist burns, stinging pain radiating from the cuts on my wrist. I'm so aware of my arm, my skin, my heartbeat, I swear I can feel my blood pumping to my wounds. I sit there staring for a minute before the blood starts to drip down my arm and threatens my sage green bedsheets.
‘ shit, I forgot I would actually need to take care of this after I actually cut.’
I get up from my bed and listen to the hallway. It sounds like dad's making dinner, while I was cutting, Heavy started doing homework in the kitchen, and mom's still at the motor shop. I open the door, holding my wrist, and I go into the bathroom. I take a quick sigh of relief, thankful that no one saw me. That relief is quickly interrupted by a drop of blood hitting the floor and I remember why I'm here.
First I go into the cabinet and l grab a washcloth and run it under warm water. I place it on my wrist and apply pressure to stop most of the bleeding, the heat and pressure makes the cuts sting even more. But after a few minutes the bleeding is pretty much done, I wipe the drop of blood from before and I put down the cloth and go back into the cabinet and grab our large first aid kit.
I grab gauze, bandage wrap (the kind that clings to itself) and antiseptic gel. I put the stuff on the bathroom counter, put down the toilet lid and sit down. I take the antiseptic and put it on the cuts, making sure I don't touch the nozzle of the tube to my skin. Then I take a bit of gauze and place it around my wrist, I hold it in place with my knee while I struggle with the wrap. Eventually I get it and wrap it over the gauze, wrapping it tightly to keep it all in place but keeping it just loose enough to be comfortable.
I put the gauze, bandages and antiseptic gel back in the first aid kit and put it all back in the cabinet. I grab the bloody cloth to place in my own laundry so nobody else sees it.
I listen by the door, making sure no one is by the door or walking by. I quietly exit the bathroom and back into my room. I close my door and take another sig of relief, though I can actually stay relieved this time. Dad's probably almost done with dinner, and I hear mom coming back inside. Before I plop back down on my bed I grab a hoodie from my closet and put it on. It's one that Chive gave me in middle school. It's baggy, even on him, so it's always drowning me in the worn out fabric. Despite being washed many times, the faint smells of cigarettes and whiskey still remain. I've grown to find it oddly comforting.
Middle school was when I came out as trans, and began to face harassment and became depressed and anxious. Out of everyone, somehow I feel chive has always understood what I needed most, it's never been direct but he's always been there for me. The hoodie always made me feel more masculine, even though there was nothing spectacular about it.
I can hear Heavy rush up the stairs and turn on his game before dinner. ‘God he's obsessed with that crap.’ about 10 minutes goes by before dad calls us down.
“Kids! Dinner time!” I hear dad yell from the kitchen. I get up and put my phone in my pocket. As I'm walking downstairs, I prepare my responses to any questions about the hoodie. No doubt dad will notice. I haven't worn it since the end of middle school. It used to be a silent way to let people know I was struggling, and of course right now I AM struggling, but I

don't want them to know this time.
‘its just comfortable’ I prepared myself, and walking downstairs I realized that mom turned on the AC -Probably complaining that the stove from Dad's cooking made the kitchen feel too warm- which normally would be irritating, now works in my favor. When I walk into the dining room dad is setting down bowls, he made some kind of soup I guess. He puts out a fifth bowl at the end of the table, I guess uncle Chive is supposed to be joining us. I wonder what kind of old ladies he'll tell us he met today. I sit at the table and wait, mom is already at the table and I don't think heavy heard dad though his game.
“Where's heavy?” dad asks.
“How should I know? Probably playing games or something. Didn't hear you.” I shrug
“Lose the attitude, smartass” mom remarks as she sits across from me. I guess she must've had a rough day at work, but I don't have the energy to feel any sympathy, and I roll my eyes.
“Sooorrrry” admittedly, I was being a little rude, but I was just returning her attitude around back at her.
“Oh, my bad, I didn't realize you wanted to get smacked upside the head!” mom glares at me. I scoff, I can tell moms about to yell again but we're interrupted by dad putting a pot of steaming soup in the middle of the table which breaks the tension.

“This looks different than the soup you usually make.” mom remarks.
“I wanted to try a new recipe I found last week. It's pho. A Vietnamese soup dish consisting of broth, rice noodles, herbs, and meat." dad responded to moms remark
“Ooh sounds tasty!” mom looks around. I cover my ears in anticipation.
“HEAVY WHERE ARE YOU? GET DOWN HERE DAMMIT!”
I hear Heavy rush down the stairs, along with the sound of an opening window. Chive must be here too. Heavy sits down in the chair beside me. Out of the corner of my eye I see uncle Chive pop his head in the kitchen.
“Hey hey dudes, what's up? Man, you wouldn't believe the old ladies that walk these streets, I just couldn't pass ‘em by." I swear I've heard him say that exact sentence at least a hundred times by now. Usually it comes after being incredibly late for whatever mom and dad have planned, but he's never late when he's invited for dinner. I guess food is the way to a man's heart… at least Chives.
Once we were all sat down, dad scooped us all a healthy serving. Mom and Heavy are the first to dig in. gotta admit, it was good. I'm not picky, though I didn't have much of an appetite. I try not to move around too much, my wrist still hurts like hell. Anytime I move my arm, the bandages rub against the cuts. I hide my grimaces of pain the best I can. Dad keeps glancing over at me, it makes me nervous.
'does he know somehow? No that's not possible... right?' I brush it off to be because I haven't worn this hoodie in a while. It's black, though it's more faded to a dark grayish color. It has the name of some old band on it. it's faded so it's hard to tell. I think Chive painted it himself, he told me a story about it but I didn't care so I wasn't really listening when he told me. I think it says "we're the monsters on stage" or something like that. I assume it's probably an old band from when he was a teenager that wasn't popular enough to have merch to buy. Whatever it was, it doesn't stops Dad's glances from being any less anxiety inducing.
Eventually everyone started talking about their day. Mom got annoyed at a dumb entitled client at the shop who was complaining they took too long to fix his bike and demanded a discount. Heavy failed a test, no surprise there. Dad had a few students in the morning though he doesn't talk about them much. Confidentiality and all that I guess. It's funny, he has awards from his students that praise him for being so good at teaching them how to play music, but

when it comes to his own child he can't even get through a single lesson. Dad asked about my day, I didn't say much. I still didn't feel like talking to him after his "lesson" earlier.
I finished my dinner and headed back to my room. We didn't have dumb rules where you had to stay at the table if you didn't want to, as long as you excuse yourself politely and rinse your plate in the sink. Usually we do like to have some family time, games or moves or whatnot, but I just can't be bothered right now. And I still especially don't wanna be around dad. I can feel his eyes burn into me as I walk upstairs to my room, and the thought comes back to me. 'Does he somehow know what I did? Or is he still judging me for being a talentless musician and an embarrassment to him' I close my door and plop onto my bed, legs dangling off the side. I raise my arm and roll down my sleeve, small trades of blood seeping through the gauze.
‘ Damn, I know it would hurt, but not this much.’ I turn to my nightstand and grab some painkillers.
‘These should help.’ I take two and stare at my ceiling and sigh.
‘I don't know how to feel, I mean it worked, I feel better, but… wait…I… feel better? I feel better!’ Well, kinda, the continuous pain is keeping my mind more calm I think, but now I just kinda feel… numb? that's not quite right … but for all intents and purposes It worked! The realization was euphoric in a way. I didn't just fuck up my arm for no reason, and that I might have actually found something that helps, the pain kept my brain distracted. Maybe it was the painkillers, maybe it was the dull ache in my wrist, I don't know. But my thoughts were nice now, well nicer. I didn't even care about the stupid guitar, like it sucks I cant play but oh well I guess. My eyelids start to feel heavy. Just as I was about to drift asleep I hear a notification on my laptop. It’s Lif, the girl from school. I've seen her a couple times in school, and we've waved at each other in the hallways, but we've never had a one on one conversation or hung out together. Heavy always messes up my plans.

L: ‘Hey :p’
D: hey
L: wanna meet in the graveyard 2nite?

My heart skips a beat. Meeting up? In person? Together? Just us? I try to keep my composure as I type my response.

D: Sure, why the graveyard tho?
L: I heard some people talking about graffitiing some gravestones, I wanna scare the hell out of em >:3
D: lol
D: When are they supposed to be there?
L: I heard them talking about going around 1-2.
D: Alright, wanna meet up around 12:30?
L: kay :D
D: see you then :)
L: see ya!

My heart flutters. I've had a crush on Lif since I saw her. She's so kind and strange, but in a really.. cute way.
Lif always wants to hangout in weird places, though I guess this time It’s for a good cause you could say. Scaring some losers so they don't graffiti over some poor soul's resting place. I

look at the clock, 6:57. I should get a bit of sleep. I set my phone to go off at 12:00 but I put it on vibrate so I don't wake anyone else. I plug my phone in, set it beside my pillow, and drift to sleep.

Chapter 2: Graveyard shift

Chapter Summary

Dee and Lif hangout at night

Chapter Notes

💚 WARNINGS FOR THIS CHAPTER
- references to self harm
💚 I continue to project heavily onto the characters

💚 I continue to be cringe

💚 Attemping to set up a little bit of detail about Lif/ her family

I feel my phone buzz underneath my pillow, I open my eyes and turn off my alarm. I have a half an hour to get ready. I got up and opened my window to see what the weather felt like. A bit chilly, I'll be fine in my hoodie. I sit at my desk to fix my hair and redo my makeup. I know it's dark and Lif probably won't even notice, but I feel better when I look nice.
Since we're going to the graveyard to scare some assholes, I grab my pepper spray just in case things go south. Its not much but hopefully it'll be enough for whatever cowards are supposed to show up. By the time I'm ready it's 12:20, perfect timing. I grab my phone and headphones to listen to music on the walk over.
I sneak out the window, I make sure to be quiet, Heavy caught me sneaking out once. Didn't tell mom or dad, nope, instead he posted a pic of me on insta. What a moron. I climb out my window and close it behind me, only leaving a small crack so I can open it back up later. I climb down and I start walking to the cemetery. Even if those douchebags don't show up, it'll still be nice to hang out. My wrist doesn't hurt as much now, but it still stings a bit though. I have to make sure the bandages are hidden, keep my sleeve down at all times. I don't want Lif to worry about me, she already has a lot on her plate as it is.

I arrive at the cemetery, I peek past the gate, into the small building where people check in for visits, it's small, like a shed. There's a window on the side, facing the gate. I see the night security guard, he's fucking sleeping at the front desk. What a lousy guard. I look around for any easy entrance, or anyone around and I don't see either. Lif messaged me, she's almost here, so I climb over the fence so if I fall I don't embarrass myself in front of her. The fence is relatively short, taller than the average person, but still easy enough to get over. When I hop down from the top my sleeve gets snagged on one of the edges, feels like a scraped my

arm too. Fuck that hurt. And on the one I cut earlier? Seriously? Damn, of course that would be the kind of luck I have. I roll up my sleeve to make sure I didn't fuck up my wrist. The bandages got a little messed up, but considering how much that hurt I'm surprised that I'm not bleeding - at least not I've noticed so far.
I heard footsteps approaching. I look around, its Lif. She gets to the gate and waves at me before climbing over as well. She takes a bit of a tumble on the way down, landed on her arm.
"Oh shit are you okay?" I speed walk over to her. She gets up slowly and brushes some dirt off her sleeve.
"Yeah I'm good!… I think… So, you ready to spook some idiots?" lif enthusiastically asked me. I was surprised by her rebound since that looked like one hell of a fall, but if she says she's fine then I guess I'll just leave it alone for now.
"We don't even know if they're coming, you just heard them talk. Probably coward away instead." I replied
"Well, yeah. But even if not, it's still fun to be here. It's all run down and shitty."
Lif looks over at the security shed, then at the few graves that are actually here.
"A shitty place with fittingly shitty employees. I bet all these bodies have been forgotten by now."
"Yeah you're probably right, even during holidays it's like a ghost town" heh, ghost down. Graveyard. I'm hilarious.
"Well, shall we go?" she asks, gesturing to the tree towards the back.
"Yeah, sure" I follow her as she begins walking.

We sit by the tree for about 20 minutes before we start to get bored. We don't wanna talk too much just in case the guard wakes up and catches us. Plus if anyone actually did show up it would probably scare them off too. After a while Lif speaks up.
"Wanna go get slushies?" Lif turns to me
"Sure, those jerks clearly aren't coming." I stand up. I don't like slushies a whole lot, or sweets in general, but once and a while they're okay. And if it means I can spend more time with Lif then it's worth it.
We hop back over the fence after checking around for the security guard. I was careful to avoid scraping my arm again, and Lif didn't fall again either.
We walk to a little run down gas station down the road, it's pretty close to my house, and moms shop. The long term employees are pretty familiar with us, and mom and them take an extra minute or two for small talk. It's never anything personal, just variants of "this weather is great/terrible", "there's this new product you might like" or "it's been a while since we've seen you". I don't usually engage in the short conversation, but the occasional "hello" or head nod sneaks it's way out of me when I'm in as close to a social mood as I get.
As we're walking my hand gently brushes against Lif's, the touch startles me and I pull my hand away. It might have been more dramatic than it felt because Lif looks at me with a confused look. She doesn't say anything though, which I guess I can be grateful for. The sudden movement hurt my wrist and it begins to hurt like hell again, maybe the scrape on the fence did more damage than I thought. I'll have to check when I get back home.
We get to the gas station and the florescent lights briefly burns my eyes that had gotten used to the darkness. One of the usual employees is there, he nods at me when we walk in and continues talking to a coworker that I don't recognize. The conversation sounds like training, maybe a new face I'll have to get used to. Lif and I head to the back where the slushy machine is. There's 3 flavors to choose from, blue raspberry cherry, and a cola flavor. Lif gets

a medium cherry and I get a small blue raspberry. As we check out there's a display of snacks on sale, and a bag of jalapeno flavored peanuts catches my eye. It sounds good so I grab them as well. We walk up to the counter and our total is 571.74 ₽ ($7.25 USD) and I pay. Lif offers to pay me back for her slushy, but I refuse to take it, the slushy was cheap and I don't mind paying for her.

We walk back out into the chilly night and my eyes have to re adjust to the darkness. We walk to the end of the block where a bus stop sits. I look at my phone, its 1:15, so all the busses have stopped running a bit ago. We sit in the vacant bench and stay in silence for a while. I open my peanuts and try one, they're alright, not as spicy as I thought they would be. I offer one to Lif and she seems to like them a lot more than I do, so I just give her the majority and just take a couple here and there. The conversation is mild, not really talking about anything specific. She talks about her parents, and her brother coming home from college. Then she asks about Heavy.

"He's fine" I tell her, though to be honest we haven't hung out much lately outside of walking to and from school.

"What's your brother like?" I ask

"He's nice! Really creative, does a lot of painting and stuff."

"Cool… what'd he go to college for?"

"Oh, he got a degree in veterinary science, he's looking for a job in the city, one of them asked for a follow up interview next week so that's looking good." I nod along as she speaks. Her voice is so calming, I don't even care what she's talking about, as long as I can listen to her I'm happy.

"Do you have any idea what you wanna do after high school?" Lif asked me.

"I don't know, probably something with computers." In reality, I haven't thought about it much, but in the second before I responded I figured I could easily get through some sort of computer science degree and land a nice job in a cozy cubical somewhere.

"Ohhh, yeah that sounds pretty cool. you'll probably be able to get a comfortable salary with that." she pauses and looks sad.

"Hey, you alright?" I ask

"Yeah I…" she pauses and sighs. "No… Its just… I feel like everyone around me has such promising lives ahead of them and I just kinda feel like… I'm gonna get left behind." she admits. Her words shock me, she always seems so carefree, and it never seems like she cares what anyone else thinks. Guess its kinda stupid of me to assume that's not just some sort of act or mask.

"Hey" I place my hand on her shoulder. "We still have over a year to figure it out, and even after that there's no rush. Who decided it was a good idea for 18 year olds to decide what they're supposed to do for the next 70 years of their lives." I try to lighten the mood as I've never been good at helping people when they're upset, I'm not sure it helped. "Listen, whatever you decide to do, I'm sure you'll do amazing. And if I'm being honest… I'm not sure what to do either. computer science was just the first thing that came to mind when you asked. I guess… I wanted it to seem like I had my shit together."

"You asshole!" Lif giggles, shoving my hand away in order to turn to look in my direction. Shes silent for another moment. "Thanks… I needed to hear that." She smiles at me and my hear flutters.

We talk for a bit longer -well, Lif is doing most of the talking- before tiny raindrops start to fall from the sky and we figure its about time to head home. before we leave the shelter of the bus stop, I pull my hood over my hair, it'll be frizzy as hell if I don't dry it right and I really

don’t feel like dealing with that right now. We walk out from the bus stop and face the rain. We don’t talk much while walking back, but the gentle pitter patter of raindrops on the concrete, and puddles forming in the potholes along the road fill the silence. I can feel Lif walk closer to me, and after a few minutes our hands brush together again. Instead of pulling away, I feel her hand gently grab onto mine. It makes me wonder if she did it on purpose, and if it was on purpose on the way to the gas station as well. We reach her place first, and we slow to a halt as we reach her front door.
“You’re gonna go in the front door? you don’t need to… sneak back in or anything?” I ask
“nope, both of my parents are pretty heavy sleepers, plus my mom always has the radio on while she sleeps. They won’t hear me come back in.” she puts her key in the lock and pauses. “I really enjoyed this, we should do it again sometime.”
“Y-yeah, me too. We’ll definitely have to do something like this again.”
Lif takes a small step closer to me. Standing on her front step shes a couple inches taller than me, it’s a bit intimidating… She leans over and places a gentle kiss on my cheek, turns back to her door and opens it before whispering “goodnight” with smile and heading inside. I’m frozen by her step. ‘what… was that…’ my face feels warm and is undoubtedly matching with a tomato. I turn away from her door and begin the solo walk back to my place, its only a couple minutes but I walk faster so I can get out of the progressively heavy rain. The next couple minutes are spent overthinking everything from the last hour.
‘Did she really just kiss me? why? It’s only our first time really hanging out together, that seems a bit fast doesn’t it? Was that her plan all along? Was that supposed to be some sort of joke? Is she expecting me to tell somebody only for her to deny it and make me look like a creep for lying about that? No, that’s not like her, right? But how can I be sure, were not even that close. What if shes going to tell her friends about it and they’re all going to laugh about how pathetic I am. Was anyone really supposed to show up in the graveyard, or was that just an excuse to hangout? No, why would she do that, if she wanted to hangout she would have just asked, right? I would have just asked, but I guess not everyone would do the same thing as me. I feel like that’s the right thing though, why would you just lie for no reason?’
Eventually I reach my house and pause to breathe and relax before I sneak back inside. I shake the overthinking from my brain as well as I can for the short climb back up to my bedroom window. I take off my damp shoes before crawling inside, and quietly hop down from my windowsill.
After setting my shoes on a pile of tissues, I take off my also damp hoodie and toss it aside. The bloody bandages wrapped around my wrist pierce through my peripheral vision as the memories of tearing skin flood back into my brain. A groan escapes my chest as I plop down on my bed and stare at my wrist.
‘Was it really bleeding that much? No… this must be from the fence.” Despite wanting to change the bandages, the risk of Heavy waking up keeps me laying in bed. After considering what I’m wearing, I get up to grab a pair of shorts and a different t-shirt that I normally sleep in. I lift my blanket and hop under, my eyelids start feeling heavy, and i slowly drift to sleep.

Chapter 3: Pancakes and panic

Chapter Summary

Dee, Heavy and their parents celebrate the warm weather by hanging out at Anna's pool.

My morning begins with the sun seeping through my blinds, and the smell of breakfast throughout the house. Today is Sunday, which means dad is making pancakes, the one day when he makes something he considers unhealthy- which I guess it is, but it's not the worst. He usually makes it with breakfast sausage and eggs. Despite everything that happened yesterday, I'm actually looking forward to eating breakfast downstairs with everyone.
I rub my eyes before stretching and sitting up to get out of bed. Looking at my clock its 7:59, I get up and grab my hoodie that I tossed on the floor last night. I listen to see if Heavy was awake yet, I don't hear anything, so hes probably downstairs helping dad. I walk as quietly as I can down the highway to the bathroom so I can change my bandages. I should have done it last night, but I guess I have to deal with it now. Grabbing the big first aid kit I think 'I should probably get my own so nobody notices the stuff in here running out faster than usual.' If dad doesn't have any plans, I might be able to go out and grab one later. Or I might just have to sneak out again. I unwrap the now blood stained bandages from last night, the gauze tugs at some of the wounds where they started bleeding again after scraping along the fence. It hurts but the bandages come off, and the air tickles my arm as my skin is exposed for the first time in hours.
I go through the same steps as last night, I dampen a cloth and clean up my wrist, then spread on ointment, place gauze, and wrap with bandages. I toss my dirty bandages into the small trashcan by the sink, making sure to bury them under the other trash. I throw some extra tissues on top for good measure. Its usually me or Heavy that's responsible for taking out the trash, so hopefully mom and dad wont notice. They're downstairs most of the time anyway, so its less likely they use the bathroom up here unless it's during the night. All of these factors give me some comfort that I won't get caught, not anytime soon anyway. Dad might get suspicious, but as long as he doesn't discover any hard proof I'll be okay. He wont do anything if he cant fully prove it. That, I can be grateful for.
I head downstairs and the smell of pancakes grows stronger with every step. Heavy is in the kitchen, helping dad flip pancakes while dad cooks the sausage, and eggs like I thought he would be.
"Ah, good morning Dee. Did you sleep well?" dad turns to me as I slide out a chair from the kitchen table.
"Morning. I slept fine." my voice came out more hoarse than it normally does when I wake up, probably from all of my crying yesterday.
"That's good. Could you help and cut up some fruit for the pancakes? There's a bowl in the fridge"
'Just as I was about to sit down, really?' I push my chair back in. "yeah, sure." As I'm walking walking to the fridge I realize dad had already set out the cutting board and a knife

on the counter by the sink. I open the fridge and see a bowl of strawberries next to a smaller bowl of blueberries.
“Just the ones in the fridge?” I ask
“There’s bananas on the counter. And the others are already washed.” he responds without looking away from what he and heavy are doing.
“M’kay”
I begin with the bananas, I cut up two, one for heavy and one for mom, dad and I don’t like bananas-its a texture thing. The strawberries are cold to touch (on account of them being in the fridge) and slightly damp, dad probably washed them before starting breakfast. The leafy bits get set aside with the banana peels for dad compost. Last summer mom made dad a garden bed, but since it was pretty late in the season he didn’t get to use it for much. But the time for planting leafy vegetables is getting close so hes been preparing meticulously.
I finish cutting the strawberries, and am about to rinse off the cutting board when I noticed how the strawberries left little pinkish red lines where I had been cutting them - like they were bleeding. It made me think of last night, what I did, how it felt, how much I enjoyed the sting… ‘no! stop thinking about that.’ I shake the thoughts from my head and rinse off the cutting board. I place the 3 separate bowls of each fruit in the center of the table and put the knife in the sink as well.
“All done?” dad asks
“yeah”
“Good, these are almost done too. Could you set out the plates, please?”
“mhm” I hum. I walk towards the cabinets and ask “The syrup too?”, might as well check while I’m already grabbing stuff. And hopefully if I do nice things for dad, he’ll forget about yesterday, and everything will go back to normal.
“yep.” Dads voice is annoyingly cheerful for the time of morning. I grab the syrup first and put it on the counter before grabbing some plates and bringing them to the table. I hear dad and Heavy taking things off the stove, so I finally take my seat at the table. Dad brings over two big plates, one of the sausages, and one with the eggs. He goes back and grabs the big stack of pancakes while Heavy comes running over with the bottle of syrup I left on the counter. He sits next to me and looks around.
“Wheres mom” He asked, and now that he mentioned it, I haven’t see her all morning either.
“She went over to Anna’s after dinner to help set up her pool for the warmer weather. They had a few drinks afterwards, so your mother stayed the night.” dad responded
“Oh, okay… wait does that mean we can go swimming at miss Anna’s pool like last year?!” heavy asked excitedly
“Yep, we were planning to today since it’s the first day it’s warm enough- if they were able to get it ready that is. Ill have to check in with your mother.” dad sits at the table with me and Heavy and passes silverware to both of us. Dad and Heavy are doing most of the talking, I’m too busy thinking about what dad said. There’s no fucking way I can go swimming right now!! I mean, its not like I’ve ever been a huge fan of swimming, I’ll usually just float around trying not to get my hair wet. But its not like I can wear long sleeves in the pool, I know they make long sleeve swim shirts, but that wont help me today. And it would be suspicious if I all of a sudden want one after never caring before. I’ve usually just worn a regular T-shirt or tank top. Dad was on his phone for a moment - messaging mom or Anna I assume.
‘please, please don’t let this happen. I’m so fucked. How am I gonna get out of this?’ I start to feel sick, how could this already be happening??? Of course something like this would happen to me, it’s just my luck. I’ve got to figure out how to hide my arm without being

weird.
Dad's phone dings and he types a response.
"Your mom finished fixing the pool last night, so we can head over as soon as we're done with breakfast!" he tells us. 'fuck.'
"Awe, sweet!" Heavy yells. "Dee aren't you excited?!" he asks
"huh? oh uh, yeah. sure." He looks at me strangely 'shit shit shit. I'm probably acting strangely, what am I doing that's different than I normally do?'
"Dee…?" He begins. My heart is racing, I glance down at my sleeve just to make sure I didn't start to bleed again without noticing. I'm not, so that's not it. Did he see my bandages at some point? I thought I was being careful. So many thoughts are rushing through my head before he speaks up a moment later.
"Are you gonna finish those pancakes?" he asked. 'what. that's IT?! Heavy you little piece of shit.' I sigh, partially out of relief and partially out of annoyance that he got me so worked up just to ask something so stupid.
"No" I respond. He looks back and forth between me and the last pancake on my plate.
"yes Heavy, you can can hate it" I don't even need him to speak to know what he was thinking. He chuckles and grabs the pancake from my plate onto his with his fork, he eats almost half of the pancake in one bite. Disgusting. Dad already took his plate to the sink and had went to his room to get ready, or grab some of our summer stuff I assume. My chair scrapes along the floor as I get up to also go put my plate in the sink and head to my room. My legs shake as I walk, how the fuck am I going to get away with this. I mean, some of my thicker bracelets could cover most of it, but what if they start to bleed again? The bandage wrap is pretty close to my skin tone, so just barely peaking out from under some bracelets would be hard to notice. But who the hell wears big bracelets while swimming? I groan and flop onto my bed. Of course mom fixed the pool and fucked me over. Of course! I swear, I'm cursed. I'm fucking cursed.
I think back to last summer when we went to Anna's pool all the time, I had to get new swim trunks at the beginning of the summer so dad took me and Heavy shopping. I bought a black mesh cover up, it was from the women's section but I thought it would help me feel better about my tape since it would disguise it more if I ever decided to go shirtless. I never ended up wearing it, I don't even know if I kept it or where it would be, but it might save me now. I take a cardboard box out of my closet, it's full of swim trunks, shorts, tank tops, shorts, and various things I only wear during the summer. In the bottom of the box I feel it, the thin mesh underneath everything I actually wore last year. I pull it out from the bottom of the box, and I stare at it for a moment. It's tightly woven and has skull designs scattered around it. Reaching back into the box, I reach for a pair of swim trunks, and one of my tank tops. The box gets shoved back into my closet, and I change into my swim attire, praying to the god I don't believe in that nobody notices my bandages. I put on a couple smaller bracelets, ones I don't wear often, but hoping they help disguise my arm more. My heart is pounding out of my chest, and my legs are trembling. I grab a book from my shelf so I have an excuse not to go in the pool if I start to feel like I'm going to die. I take a couple deep breaths before turning my door handle and walking back downstairs. Dad and heavy are already waiting by the door when I get down there. A large tote bag of towels on the floor.
"Geez, took you long enough!" Heavy exclaimed at me.
"Do you have everything you need?" Dad asked. I just nodded in response. "Well, lets go" he said far to too cheerfully for my taste. Me and heavy head to the car as dad locks the front door behind us. The doors are unlocked and a wave of heat hits me as I open the door. Its not too hot out, °25c (°77f), but the black car heated up like an oven, especially since it was

parked outside. Shortly after Heavy and I got in the car, Dad got behind the wheel and started the car and the ratio turned on. The AC cooled the car down pretty fast, the drive to Anna's isn't far though, 10, maybe 15 minutes with traffic. 10, maybe 15 minutes to keep myself from having a panic attack. I think about message Lif, but I doubt she's awake yet. I really wish I could tell her everything. Everything about dad, the guitar, my arm… I'll get there one day. Hopefully
But for now, I'm fucked.

Chapter 4: The pool

Chapter Summary

To celebrate the beginning of spring, everyone goes to hangout in Anna's pool. Dee unfortunately can't enjoy the nice weather, because he's too busy stressing about his arm.

Chapter Notes

Hey y'all, sorry it's been a hot second since the last chapter I updated. As much as I'd love to say the authors curse got me and I got into some crazy situation, I cannot. I just got busy with finals and AP class things. But I'm finally free, and am about to graduate in 30 minutes!!
This chapter is a bit shorter than others, but I hope you enjoy!!

The AC in dads car makes me shiver slightly, that or I'm shaking from the anxiety flowing through my veins. Its probably both. Dad is humming along to a song on the ratio and Heavy is scrolling on his phone like always. Every bump we hit in the road makes me feel like my stomach is about to jump out of my chest, and with every second we get closer to Anna's I become more and more aware of how fucked I am. I want to just disappear. Dive head first into the deep end and never re-surface. Maybe this is what deserve, this was a stupid idea and never would have been able to get away with it for long.
I feel the car begin to slow as we approach Anna's driveway. Mom is standing outside in her bathing suit wrapped in a towel, a little damp. Evidently shed already taken a dive to check that everything was working properly. Dad shuts off the car, and opens the door, Heavy follows. With a shaking hand I open my car door and walk out into the heat. It feels nice after the cold AC on the way here. We walk into Anna's house, and to the back yard, it takes us a minute to get through, her house is big, really big. From what I've heard from mom, shes pretty rich, or at least very comfortable. No idea where she gets the money, she never mentions having a job. She has pictures of vintage motorcycles and vehicles on her walls, everything is neat and there's not a speck of dust to be found. If I didn't know any better, I'd think nobody lived here. Her back yard is just as neat as the rest, grass perfectly green and trimmed, pool right in the center. Heavy runs straight in, mom, dad, and Anna get in the deep end, and I put my book down on a table before hesitantly getting in myself. The water has a bit of a chill to it, but with the sun beaming down, after a minute or two it feels fine. I take a nervous look at my arm, so far it looks fine, the bandages darkened from the water, but under my shawl, its not very noticeable. I'll just stay as calm as I can, not do anything too rough, and just wrap up in my towel as soon as I get out. Heavy is too busy splashing around to notice anything, and while normally I'd be annoyed at his high energy, right now I'm grateful

for it, because it keeps everyone else distracted.
I don't do much other than float around, Heavy and I briefly shot each other with water guns we bought last summer, but then one of us accidentally splashed mom in the face and she put an end to it. Moms short temper, another thing I'm not usually grateful for, but am right now. My sleeves rolled up more times than I'm comfortable with while we were playing around. I'm also glad we stopped because Heavy got my hair wet as well, it's going to get all weird and frizzy if I don't dry it properly, and I'd rather not have to do more than I have to. As much as I care about how I look, it's annoying as hell to keep up all the time. But I'd rather deal with the annoyance than feel shitty if I don't keep it up.
Something I haven't thought about until now, what will my scars look like? It hasn't been long since I cut for the first time, and I have no idea what I should expect from the healing process. They've been itchy as hell and I have no idea if that's normal or not. I've been doing everything right, haven't I? Granted, it's barely been 2 days and I haven't done any research on how I'm supposed to go about this. Is there a right way to go about this? Other than basic wound care, I doubt it. This isn't really the kind of thing people write instruction manuals about. So my best bet is to guess my way through this mess and hope I can get away with it. I probably shouldn't do this too often, just wait until summer is over and hope I get through it in one piece. Since Lif and I have officially hung out in person, its only a matter of time before we hangout regularly I'm sure. I hope I will be able to scheduled hangouts over our pool days so I can just go hangout with Lif instead. she would understand my situation, right? … right?
Another hour passes before mom and Heavy decide it's time for lunch and we should head home. I desperately just want to spend the rest of the day alone in my room reading, and re-watching Death note. We all get out of the pool and dry off the best we can, dad goes to start the car while mom and Anna are saying bye. I grab my book from the table after drying off, Heavy's flip flops squeak annoyingly as we walk to the car shortly after dad. The AC is on once again 'We just got out of the pool, isn't it cold enough?' I lean towards the door, using dads seat to block most of the AC. Mom opens her door and hops in after us, and moments later were off, back home.
I don't think anyone saw my bandages, I feel like a weight was lifted off my shoulders. If I can get away with it so obviously, I should be fine if I do it every so often, right? I mean how much more obvious can it be than in a pool, barely any sleeves on. I'll have to wait and see for sure if anyone noticed until we get home, and one of them talks to me privately. None of them are actually strangely so... I think I'm fine.
"Hey dad, are we doing anything else today?" Heavy asked, breaking the silence.
"Nope. Is there something you wanted to do?"
"I was just gonna ask if I could go over to Curly's to do some homework"
"Hmmm..." Dad seems to be thinking about it.
"Only if you clean your room first." mom interrupts them.
"But moommm. Were just studying! We're not doing anything fun, I don't need to earn it or anything. " Heavy whines
"I don't care, get it done or no Curly's"
"But that'll take forever!"
"Listen to your mother Heavy… How about you do half of it now, and the other half after dinner. A compromise."
"I can do that! Can I do that mom, please?" he begs
mom huffs "Yeah, whatever. Just keep your room clean in the first place and we wont have to do this every time you want to go somewhere. Believe it or not I don't enjoy arguing."

“yeah…” Heavy sinks into his seat. Sounds like I’ll have some peace and quiet once we get home.
Sometimes I don’t understand how he’s my brother, were total opposites, but then I look at mom and it all makes sence again, I guess mom and dad are kinda opposite too. I hate how much like dad I am sometimes. He’ll never hear me admit it though, I’d be six feet under before I’d ever let him have any idea of what I just admitted. But I guess I’m kinda kinda like mom too, I mean that is how genetics work I guess. I think I have the negative parts of both of them though. I get annoyed easily like mom does, and even though its beneficial for me, I’m pretty sure I get my ability to sneak around from dad. I don’t know if that can be something genetic (it most definitely is not), but uncle Chive has said some things that makes me think dad was a sneaky shithead too.
Maybe one day when dad is old and doesn’t care anymore, I’ll confess all my crimes against his household and well laugh and he’ll tell me that he was exactly like me when he was my age. And well laugh over drinks and nothing will matter anymore. No secrets. No sneaking around. No arguments.
Yeah… one day… one day that’ll be real nice…

If I even live long enough to see it.

Chapter 5: Game night

Chapter Summary

Dee suffers through their weekly game night.

Chapter Notes

sorry this chapter took so long like the last one! i got major wrighting block and also became obsessed with The pitt which took my attention for a while.
But im back! and Ill hopefully be posting once a month maybe?
TWs for this chapter
💚relapse/depictions of self-harm💚

It's been about a week since we went swimming at Anna's. I've come to the conclusion that nobody noticed, or else they would have said something by now. Everything has been surprisingly normal around the house, a little less awkward. Dad and I even talked a couple times without getting annoyed at each other, so that's progress I suppose. Uncle Ches is gonna be coming over for later for our weekly game night. The last time he was over was the night I first cut. He was quieter than usual, maybe he realized something was up with me and dad. He's a lot smarter than he seems on the surface-when it comes to people and music anyway. Heavy used to ask him for help on homework and he'd be just as clueless as Heavy was.

I'm sitting in my room before dinner, talking to Lif. Chatting about nothing in particular, dreading the upcoming school week, her parents, my parents, music, whatever. I told her about our game nights and she said she wished her family did things like that. They're not super close and are lucky if they eat dinner in the same room. I feel bad for her but at the same time I envy the alone time. I'd never admit that to her face though, I don't want to be rude.

L: Hey, on the topic of family… sort of..

D: ?

L: do you think I could come over sometime? Maybe for dinner? Ik you have issues with your dad but I'm sorry his cooking sounds amazing and I'm dying for something other than leftovers or takeout :')

D: I don’t think there’d be an issue with that, I can ask about it tonight if you want.

L: yay!

D: would after school be okay some day? We could walk together

L: yeah! I’d like that <3

D: well, my uncle should be here soon… hopefully.

D: I’ll talk to you later

L: ttyl :)

My heart is beating out of my chest. Just the idea of her wanting to come over makes my head spin. Every time I talk to her I just fall harder and harder. I’ve never felt like this before, and we’re not even dating. There’s no way she feels the same way. If i get my hopes up too high, I’ll only get disappointed and heartbroken. But I guess ill have to ask mom and dad if she can come over sometime. I’m not really sure how they’ll act about it. I mean I’ve had friends over before… in elementary school. I learned pretty quickly that other kids thought we were weird and parents thought we were dangerous- which isn’t an *inaccurate* assumption, but only if you get on moms bad side. Dad will just give you psychic damage, and maybe send a glitter bomb in your mailbox.

I close my laptop and head downstairs where mom and Heavy are already sitting in the dining room and talking about what games we should play. We switch who gets to decide every week, to keep it fair. Usually it Heavy and mom, or dad and I, but once a month we let Ches decide. Sometimes he brings one from his place, usually is something old and obscure, but never lacking entertainment. Before I join them at the table, I grab a glass of water, then take my place at the dinner table next to Heavy, they’re thinking of going with something classic, sounds like they’re between Monopoly and Uno. Dad is finishing dinner, taking a pizza out of the oven and setting it on the counter. He made the dough yesterday, he even made the sauce himself. I guess I understand why Lif would want to come over for dinner. Just in time, we hear a window open somewhere in the house, Ches is here. Dad grabs plates and sets them on the table, mom grabs them to pass around, and Ches sits in his seat at the end of the table spitting his usual nonsense. Dad sets the pizza in the middle of the table and sits down himself.

“Wow, dad that looks really good!” Heavy exclaimed, loudly

“Its a new recipe! well, dig in!”

Heavy and mom are the first to grab a slice, then me and dad, and lastly Ches. Mom, dad and Ches are speaking about their usual things, Heavy’s mouth is too stuffed with cheese and

tomato sauce to talk even if he wanted to. I just eat my pizza, wanting to go back and talk to Lif.

Dinner is over and were all gathered on the living room floor, Uno cards in hand, phones left at the dinner table. Were all positioned a but awkwardly to avoid seeing each others cards. We played in teams once, but we banned that after dad and I won every round we played that night. Mom and dad are sat against the couch, Heavy and I are sat on pillows, and Ches is just sitting on the cold floor. The games begin and it goes as it always does- mom and Heavy get lucky sometimes, dad and I actually strategize, and Ches… does whatever Ches does. Dad has music playing quietly in the background, nobody is arguing, were all having a good time. Well… they're all having a good time. I should be having a good time too, but I just feel… kinda sad? kinda annoyed? kinda… nothing? i don't even know how I feel. I wouldn't say i ever really enjoy game night, but I normally can at least enjoy myself a little bit. I'm just sorta tired I guess. Maybe I'll be able to head up to my room early, I'll win a round and then go up. I just wanna lay in bed and think about nothing.

Dad wins the first round.

Heavy wins the second.

Ches the third.

Dad the fourth.

Mom the fifth.

Mom the sixth.

Ches the seventh.

Heavy the eighth.

I round up my stuff and go up to my room while everyone else plays more.

"Don't be such a sore loser!" Mom calls after me. At least they let me leave.

I hop into my bed and wrap myself in the covers. I don't turn mu ceiling light on and just use my bedside lamp, which is pretty bright anyway. I figure i could just go to bed early, but i check my phone first. I'm about to massage Lif when I remember I was supposed to ask if she could come over. well… shit. I don't have the energy to get back downstairs to ask. Maybe I can catch dad before he goes to bed? Opening my phone, I see a notification from her, but I feel too guilty to respond. I was so wrapped up in how i was feeling that i completely forgot about Lif. Am i a bad friend? a good friend wouldn't forget something as simple as that, right? I bet Lif wouldn't forget something as simple if I asked. Whats wrong with me?

I try to distract myself and take some deep breaths but it doesnt work.

The thought creeps into my head anyway.

The urge.

Fuck

But I have school tomorrow, is that really a good idea?… do I care?

I try to argue against it but the urge doesn't go away, or get quieter. I know its bad, and I know I shouldn't do it… but then why does it help? I mean people smoke and drink to cope and that's perfectly fine so… I guess what I'm doing isn't so bad. I'm not giving myself lung cancer or drinking my way to liver failure… fuck it. The urge powers its way through my rational thinking. I sit up and reach into my side table drawer to find my blade. I set it on top of my table and get out of bed to head to the bathroom for supplies.

Peaking out into the hallway, it sounds like everyone is still playing, so I head to the bathroom and close the door. I grab the first aid kit and grab gauze, bandage wrap, ointment, and then I grab 2 black washcloths from a storage shelf full of towels and toilet paper. I don't think ill bleed that much, but who knows. Maybe eating pizza for dinner makes you bleed more. I put the first aid kit away, and put everything except for the washcloths in my pockets and just hope nobody comes upstairs while heading back to my room.

Luckily, nobody did, and I get to use my unhealthy coping mechanisms in piece. I plop back on my bed and empty my pockets onto my side table. I don't really want to cut on my wrist again, so I decide my thigh is the next best. I maneuver around on my bed to pull my pants down and I stare at the blank canvas. I grab my blade and have a washcloth ready in my other hand. I know I should avoid my inner thigh since there's more chance to hit something important on accident. I don't think I've gone deep enough to hit anything, but I just wanna be careful. The blade is cold in my hand as I press it against my thigh.

Swipe.

Pain.

Little white line fills with blood.

Feels good.

Again.

Again.

Again.

Wipe blood away.

Repeat until satisfied.

My thigh fills with bloody lines and the burning pain takes up all my thoughts. I look down at what I've done and take it in. Some deeper than others, some stopped bleeding already, some are more crooked. I take a deep breath and wipe my blade on my washcloth, then set it down. blood begins to drip down my thigh, I wipe it up and apply pressure to the area until the bleeding is basically done and i grab the gauze to put over the area. I need a bit more than last time, I overlap two pieces to cover everything and wrap it up. It feels a bit strange, but I'm happy. My blade gets put in the drawer, I add the gauze and bandage wrap with it, and the bloody towel gets tossed in my laundry bin. I lay down and go back on my phone, it's almost the time I normally go to bed, and I figure getting a little head start wouldn't hurt. But just as I'm about to turn my light off, I hear footsteps approaching, I figure its just Heavy and turn my lamp off and get comfortable.

Knock, Knock, Knock

My. Heart. Stops.

My door creaks open, letting in a thin stream of light from Heavy's room.

"Dee? Are you awake?" It's dad. What the fuck does he want? I do my best do act sleepy, turning to look at the door, eyes squinty from the light.

"hm?"

"oh sorry, did i wake you?" dad invites himself in and sits on the edge of my bed. I roll around to face him fully.

"what do you want?" i grumble, hoping to really sell the sleepy act. Dad takes a deep breath before he speaks again.

"I wanted to ask if you were okay. Its not like you to leave game night early. And you didn't seem like yourself during dinner either."

shit.

shit.

shit.

"dad. I'm fine. just a bit extra tired. I came up to go to bed early" He places a hand on my knee.

he knows.

he definitely knows.

“Its been more than just tonight, for the last couple weeks you haven’t been acting right. Coming up to bed early, talking less, I mean you’ve barely make any sort of snarky comments to mom or Heavy.” He pauses. “You can talk to me. I know I can be… harsh at times, but I’m here. So is your mother, and so is Ches. I’ve been a teenager once, and believe me, any one of us would understand more than you realize.”

That word. “harsh” yeah that’s one way to put it.

“yeah, real sweet dad, but I’m fine. Finals are coming up so I’ve been staying up to study and its been making me more tired. that’s it.”

“Well alright.” He gets up and walks to the door, just as hes about to leave he pops His head in one last time “Just remember what I said, okay? Goodnight” he shuts the door behind him. I sigh in relief. I got away for now, but I have to be careful. Laying on my pillow. all of the tired that was in me before is gone, replaced with the immense panic I felt.

“Shit.”

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